

Debris removal work continues to progress with most flood-damaged areas showing visible improvement as haulers work their way through neighborhoods.

LDEQ Secretary Chuck Carr Brown addressed the issue of removal of flood debris from in front of businesses after a Wall Street Journal reporter last week suggested businesses were concerned about having to pay large debris removal costs.

“If businesses place debris on the right-of-way, the haulers will pick it up on the first pass only,” Brown said. “Now if the debris is in the company’s parking lot, it may still qualify for removal if it constitutes a safety hazard. Business can apply for that kind of removal on a case-by-case basis by contacting parish officials.”

The companies that manage debris removal provided estimates of the percentage of work completed in each service area, an estimated completion date if one is available, the number of trucks working each service area, electronic (e-waste) recycling and of right-of-entry (ROE) removal where haulers access private property to remove debris after the homeowner has signed an ROE form.

DRC Emergency Services estimates that the percentage of debris removal work completed in East Baton Rouge Parish is 55 percent, with 180 trucks working in the area. In Lafayette Parish, DRC estimates the debris removal job is 84 percent complete, with 5 trucks working in the area. In Tangipahoa Parish, DRC estimates the debris removal job is 90 percent finished, with 5 trucks working. In Ascension Parish, 65 percent debris removal with 16 trucks working, while St. Martin Parish debris removal is 90 percent complete, DRC estimates, and one truck is working. In Iberville Parish, the debris removal job is 95 percent complete with one truck working, DRC estimates. In the City of Baker, DRC estimates the debris removal job is 90 percent complete with no trucks working at present.

DRC is working to get a recycler for e-waste in East Baton Rouge Parish and is using Gordon’s Transfer Facility for that task in Lafayette and St. Martin parishes, while LEI will handle e-waste recycling in Tangipahoa Parish. The company is also seeking e-waste recyclers in Ascension and Iberville parishes. In the City of Baker, e-waste is being sorted and separated at the landfill.

Crowder Gulf estimates the debris removal work in the city of Central is 75 percent complete. A company spokesman declined to speculate on when the job will be completed. The company has 26 trucks working in Central, and LEI is handling the e-waste recycling for the company. No right-of-entry issues have occurred in Central because the haulers have not reached the point where they require access to private property to complete debris removal.

Ceres Environmental reports that removal work for the city of Zachary is 95 percent complete, with no trucks there presently. Haulers will return for a final pass at the city’s request. Removal work is 65 percent complete in Denham Springs with 58 trucks working; and debris removal in Livingston Parish is 40 percent complete with 96 trucks working. Work in these three areas is expected to be complete within two months. E-waste is not being hauled at this time. The ROE removals will begin after Ceres Environmental receives geographic groupings from the monitoring firms.